

## 2 Resource Description



Above: The Milpitas Hacienda; Below: valley oak, photos by Brenda Tharp

# Resource Description

## Location and Setting

Fort Hunter Liggett is located approximately 3 miles inland on the central coast of California, approximately 70 miles south of Salinas and Monterey and 60 miles northwest of San Luis Obispo (see Figure 1: Regional Context). The installation encompasses 164,261 acres in southwestern Monterey County, lying within the outer coast mountain range system of Central California. It is bounded on the north and west by Los Padres National Forest, on the east by privately-owned agricultural and residential land, and to the south by the Hearst Corporation which owns 82,000 acres of primarily agricultural land. Primary access from the east is via Jolon Road (County Road G14) connecting with Highway 101 near King City. Secondary access from the west is via Nacimiento-Fergusson Road, which originates on the Pacific Coast at Highway 1 near the town of Lucia. Fort Hunter Liggett is approximately 23 miles southwest of King City and 45 miles northwest of Paso Robles.

Fort Hunter Liggett is notable for its well preserved natural setting and scarcity of development. Approximately 99 percent of the installation is undeveloped (US Army Reserve Training Center, Fort Hunter Liggett, 2003). Developed areas include the Army's administrative buildings, supply yards, military housing, recreation facilities, and support facilities. These facilities and developments are generally restricted to four small areas in the



Stony Valley area, Elizabeth Painter photo

Northern San Antonio Valley, located in the east-central portion of Fort Hunter Liggett. Most development is concentrated in the cantonment area (see Figure 2: Study Area).

In the southern portion of the cantonment area, the remnants of the small townsite of Jolon is located within an approximate 0.5-square-mile area just north of the main gated entrance on Jolon Road. To the east of Jolon are several buildings within a fenced yard comprising the Ammunition Supply Point. Further south along the west side of the Jolon Road are several support structures for the Multi-Purpose Range Complex. Combined live-fire exercises are conducted and a variety of moving and stationary armor and personnel targets have been developed within an approximate 1-mile long by 0.5-mile wide area of the San Antonio Valley floor. Several small airfields are situated in Milpitas, the San Antonio Valley, and El Piojo. Numerous unimproved roads, tank trails and vehicle tracks are found at Fort Hunter Liggett, as well as a network of regularly maintained gravel and paved roads accessing the major portions of the installation (US Army Corps of Engineers 2000b).

## Ownership and Current Uses

Fort Hunter Liggett is owned by the United States government and managed by the U.S. Army as the Western Training Center for the U.S. Army Reserves. The installation is divided into 29 designated training areas and a cantonment area. The cantonment area supports urban and administrative functions. The remainder of the installation is used for training and testing functions. There are several smaller, developed areas on the property, including military training and testing infrastructure at the Multipurpose Range Complex (MPRC), support functions in the Miller Ranch Geographic Area, and non-military inholdings at the town of Jolon and the Mission San Antonio de Padua.

The cantonment area covers approximately 6,470 acres between the San Antonio River and Mission

Creek valleys. Almost all buildings associated with the installation are within the cantonment area. Major facilities within the cantonment area include the Milpitas Hacienda<sup>1</sup>, the fire station, the post exchange, theater, commissary, service station, water storage, housing, the Directorate of Public Works (DPW) yard and shops, the DPW refueling area, pesticide storage, the autocraft shop, and the central hazardous waste accumulation facility.

Military operations at Fort Hunter Liggett include field maneuvers, fixed-range and other weapons firing, aviation training (fixed-wing and helicopter), testing activities, school house training, and other training support activities. Training exercises occur year round, although a majority of activities take place in the summer months. Training activities can vary from small-scale training and proficiency exercises to large-scale training episodes during which most training areas are in use for a week or more. Large-scale training exercises typically occur three times per year and involve 1,500 personnel, 100 tracked vehicles, and 100 wheeled vehicles. Mechanized infantry and armor units also train at Fort Hunter Liggett and typically involve a greater number of tracked vehicles (i.e., tanks and personnel carriers). Additional training activities make use of the 17-mile tank trail that connects Fort Hunter Liggett with Camp Roberts. Training exercises are usually supported by field hospitals, refueling units, personnel support and supply units, communications, engineering and air support (US Army Corps of Engineers 2000b).



Training at Fort Hunter Liggett, NPS photo

## NON-MILITARY INHOLDINGS

There are several non-military inholdings within the installation: property within the old town of Jolon and Mission San Antonio de Padua. Inholdings at Jolon include the Tidball Store structure, Saint Luke's Episcopal Church, and Saint Luke's Cemetery. The Tidball Store structure is owned by Monterey County Parks Department, but approximately 1-acre of land under and adjacent to the store is presently owned by the Army, and is part of the excess BRAC property under consideration in this study.

Mission San Antonio de Padua is on the north side of the cantonment area. The site occupies approximately 85 acres and includes the mission, residences for clergy, a cemetery, and outbuildings. The mission is owned by the Monterey Diocese of the Catholic Church.

## NON-MILITARY USES

Non-military uses include hunting and fishing, non-military housing rentals, and visitation to the Milpitas Hacienda and non-military inholdings such as the San Antonio Mission and the Tidball Store. Hunting and fishing programs are regulated by the installation on a permit basis when areas are not being used for training activities. Hunting and fishing is permitted on weekends and federal holidays; fishing in the cantonment area is permitted 7 days a week. Permit holders are required to obtain authorization from Range Control for safe access to training areas that are not in use for training and are open to hunting and fishing.

Estimates for hunting and fishing visitors include 9,500 visits in 2001 and 5,500 visits for 2002. Use dropped significantly from previous years due to changes in security measures at the installation. The busiest hunting weekends typically are opening weekends of deer, quail, and dove seasons, and some holiday weekends.

<sup>1</sup> The Milpitas Hacienda is commonly referred to as "the Hacienda" by the U.S. Army. The term Milpitas refers to Rancho Milpitas, the original Mexican land grant which is now part of Fort Hunter Liggett. Milpitas means "little fields."

Although grazing has occurred on much of the Fort Hunter Liggett lands for over 200 years, it is not currently allowed on the installation. In 1991, the Army discontinued grazing under the lease program it had started in the 1940s because of concerns about the condition of the installation's rangeland vegetation. The Army is currently investigating grazing management strategies that may promote biological diversity (US Army Reserve Training Center, Fort Hunter Liggett, 2003).

### NATIVE AMERICAN INTERESTS

Before European occupation in 1769, Fort Hunter Liggett was occupied by native people now referred to as Salinans. The members of the Salinan Nation are currently seeking status as a federally recognized tribe. The Salinan Nation is working to protect their rich heritage, specific traditional use areas and sacred sites within the boundaries of the installation. Many of these areas and sites are concentrated around the San Antonio River Valley. Members of the Salinan Nation are invited to consult on cultural resource management issues at Fort Hunter Liggett including archeological site preservation.

## BRAC Excess Property Inventory and Assessment

The BRAC excess property is located in the cantonment area (see Figures 3 and 4: Excess BRAC Property Proposed for Transfer to the National Park Service, Detail 1 and Detail 2).

### THE HACIENDA COMPLEX

The Hacienda Complex is located in the northern end of the cantonment area. It includes buildings 101 (the "Milpitas Hacienda" or "Hacienda"), 130 (storage, built 1942), 100A (separate toilet/shower facility, built 1954), and 100B (the outdoor pool service building, built 1954). Additional structures include: 100, (swimming pool), and 103 (tennis court) on the east side of the Milpitas Hacienda.



The Milpitas Hacienda, Richard Crusius photo

**Table 1: BRAC Property Proposed for Transfer**

Area	Property Number and Description	
Hacienda Complex	100	– Swimming Pool
	100A	– Separate Toilet/Shower Facility
	100B	– Outdoor Pool Service Building
	101	– Hacienda (Milpitas Ranch House)
	103	– Tennis Court
	130	– Storage Building
Ranch Bungalows	124	– Family Housing, Lieutenant Colonel/Maj.
	127	– Unaccompanied Office Quarters
	131	– Family Housing, Company Grade and Warrant Officer (chicken coop)
	132A	– Family Housing, Junior Non-Commissioned Officer/Enlisted
	149	– Family Housing, Junior Non-Commissioned Officer/Enlisted (El Piojo Ranch)
Jolon	640	– Gil Adobe
	Land	– 1-acre of land under and adjacent to the Tidball Store
Javelin Court housing area	P18-P29	– 12 buildings of 41 residential units
	P32, P37	– Associated recreational facilities



**Milpitas Hacienda.** The Milpitas Hacienda is sited on what is now known as “Hacienda Hill.” In 1929, renowned California architect Julia Morgan designed the structure for media magnate William Randolph Hearst. W.J. Smith, a contractor from San Luis Obispo, built it around 1930. The Milpitas Hacienda is listed on the National Register of Historic Places at the national level of significance. (See “Cultural Resources” section of this chapter for further detail.)

Since the Army’s acquisition of the Hearst property in 1940, the Milpitas Hacienda has been used continuously for a variety of functions. The Milpitas Hacienda served as post headquarters and officer housing and later as the fire station. The Garrison Commander was housed in the western wing of the building until 1999. Bedrooms and suites created for Hearst, visitors, and ranch staff, are currently used for guest lodging. A concessioner operates lodging, a restaurant and bar, and resides in one of the suites. The building is in good to excellent condition except water damage that has stained and loosened plaster in areas near the open corner towers (Eidsness and Jackson 1994b).

**Additional Structures and Buildings at the Hacienda Complex.** The other excess BRAC structures within the Hacienda complex were built by the Army after 1940. The swimming pool (100), the outdoor pool service building (100B), and the separate toilet/shower facility, (100A) are in good condition. The storage building (130) is also in good condition. The tennis court on the east side of the complex (103) is currently in poor condition with severe cracking throughout the paved surfacing.

### **RANCH BUNGALOWS (BUILDINGS 124, 127, 131, 132A, AND 149)**

The structures described as the “ranch bungalows” are a series of small one-story buildings currently used for housing at Fort Hunter Liggett. Buildings 124, 131, and 149 are residences associated with ranching by the former Mexican land grant holders and were later used by William Randolph Hearst’s Piedmont Land and Cattle Company. Buildings 127



Building 124, NPS photo

and 132A were both constructed by the U.S. Army and used for housing.

**Building 124** is a residence with another utilitarian building attached to the back of the main structure. The main structure dates to 1910–1929 and likely functioned as a ranch house for the James Brown Cattle Company and the Piedmont Land and Cattle Company. It may have been moved to its present location by the Army, as it is not shown on the earliest Fort Hunter Liggett maps. The Army first used building 124 as emergency enlisted men’s barracks, later as the Non-Commissioned Officer’s Club, and finally as base housing. A circa 1930s–40s utilitarian building was added on to the east side in 1946 or 1947.

While it has some historic interest related to the Hearst ranching operation, Building 124 has been heavily altered, and has lost its historical association. Both the original one-story residence and the 1930s–40s addition are in fair to good condition. The later addition to the east side lacks a perimeter foundation (Eidsness and Jackson 1994b).

**Building 131**, also known as the “chicken coop,” is a vernacular structure built circa 1910–1929. Photographs from the 1930s suggest that this building was likely part of the Hearst ranching operation and probably used for housing. Sometime before 1947, the building was moved approximately 40 feet away from the Milpitas Hacienda, to make room for the tennis court. The origin of the name “chicken coop” is unknown. Given its historical location and proximity to the Milpitas Hacienda, historians doubt that the

Hearst operation used the building for this purpose. The structure has been well maintained and is in good condition despite its age (Eidsness and Jackson 1994b).

**Building 149**, also known as the “El Piojo Ranch House,” was moved to its present location by the Army from a site called the El Piojo Ranch in the southern portion of Fort Hunter Liggett. Built sometime between 1910 and 1929, the El Piojo Ranch House is well maintained and appears to be in good condition. Although it has lost its historical integrity through alteration and relocation, it is the least altered and best example of vernacular ranch architecture on Fort Hunter Liggett. This structure once served as housing for Hearst Ranch employees (Eidsness and Jackson, 1994b).

**Building 127** was built in 1960, and used as the Unaccompanied Officer Quarters. It is located behind the fire station adjacent to **Building 132A**. Date of construction for building 132A is unknown. It was built by the U.S. Army and was used as family housing and junior non-commissioned officer/enlisted housing (construction date not available). Both buildings appear to be in good to fair condition.



Building 131 (chicken coop), NPS photo



Building 127, NPS, photo



Building 149 (El Piojo Ranch House), NPS photo



Building 132-A, NPS, photo

## JOLON AREA

BRAC excess properties in the Jolon Area include the **Gil Adobe** (Building 640) and the **one-acre of land at the Tidball Store**. The Jose Maria Gil Adobe was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974 and is the only intact remaining adobe structure within Fort Hunter Liggett that has the potential for rehabilitation. The Gil Adobe is a one-story building with seven rooms and walls constructed of adobe. The building configuration is an L-shape and contains 1,785 square feet of space. Measurement of the walls suggests that a room with 27" thick walls may be a portion of an earlier adobe which may have predated Gil's tenancy here. Other walls in the adobe are 16" thick. The roof is hipped over the north porch. The earlier redwood shingled roof (partially collapsed) is now protected with composition shingles and mineral surface roll roofing. (see Figures 5 and 6: Site Plan/Floor Plan and Existing Conditions in the "Figures" section)

Porches are present on the entire north, east, and south sides. Concrete slabs have been poured at all the porch floors, and concrete porch supports and shoring at the interior were installed in 1979.



Gil Adobe, NPS photo



Tidball Store, NPS photo

All original porch posts are missing. Recently, tarps have been placed over collapsed portions of the roof and posts as protective measures.

The Tidball Store was built in 1890 as part of the Jolon boomtown. The building is owned by the Monterey County Parks Department. One acre of land under and adjacent to the Tidball Store is currently owned by the Army and is proposed for transfer as part of the BRAC action realigning Fort Hunter Liggett (Eidsness and Jackson 1994b).

## JAVELIN COURT AREA

Housing at the Javelin Court Area is part of the larger Milpitas Housing Complex located in the cantonment area. The units are located on a cul de sac off of Bradley Drive. Javelin Court includes 3.5-acres of land with 12 separate structures containing two to four units per building, (buildings P-18 through P-29), comprising a total of 41 residential units. The buildings were recently constructed (1995) with stucco finish and red tile roofing. They appear to be in excellent condition. In addition to the housing units, there is a playground and shade structure (P32 and P37) included in the 3.5 acre area.



Javelin Court housing area, NPS photo



Javelin Court housing area, NPS photo